

February 1, 2003

To Whom It May Concern,

I have known James Meek since he was a freshman at Langley High School in McLean, Virginia. He was a student in my English class in 1983 and then again as a senior in 1987. James was an excellent student who possessed top shelf artistic ability and a keen sense for great literature.

As with many of my former students, James became a friend after he graduated from high school and we occasionally kept in touch. Our paths crossed at one of his class reunions in 2007 that I was fortunate enough to be invited to.

It was at this event where I shared with James that our son Dave had enlisted in the Army and was deployed in Iraq with the 101st Airborne. At the time, James was working with the New York Daily News and began following where our son was and how his unit was engaged. I still have emails from James detailing the very dangerous nature of what the 101st was doing at the time. The Army was in the middle of "The Surge" and Dave's unit was ground zero for it.

In January, 2008 our son was killed in an ambush. James

was among the first people I contacted when we received the news.

What followed for our family was a five year ordeal of getting the truth about how our son had died on that day in January.

What I can say is that without the effort that James put into our case, we never would have gotten to the truth of what happened and never would have found the small measure of peace and closure that such an interruption in life can bring.

James worked tirelessly at great cost to give our son the voice that had been taken from him. It speaks to the kind of man we've known him to be. He did this because were friends and because he saw an enormous injustice that needed to be addressed. We could not have given Dave his voice without the sacrifice of time and energy that James gave.

My wife and I were at a TAPS retreat for Gold Star parents in Nashville in 2018 and met another couple who had experienced a similarly questionable tragedy with their son.

When they heard the ordeal that we'd been through, they approached us and asked how we'd done it. Within an hour, they were on the phone with James, who launched into yet an exhaustive investigation to vindicate the names of brave soldiers who gave their lives for their country.

This is a thread we know that runs through James's life. It speaks of sacrifice and loyalty. We know that James has

had a deep connection to those who've served to protect our country and a willingness to help people in need.

We recently became aware that he was in some kind of great personal distress, and this morning we learned that the charges against James are deeply serious and involve child pornography.

We want to express our full confidence that James will be in compliance with his pre-trial release agreement. To endorse that trust and confidence, we want the court to know that we had asked James to stay at our house recently while we were planning to be out of town. We trusted our home to him. We trust him to be fully compliant with the court. If there is anything we can do to speak further on his behalf, please let us know.

Dave and Vicki Sharrett  
Forest, Virginia